

I Am always inclined to respect the institutions of every Community which has risen under many difficulties, from low beginnings to superior pre-eminence. At least after such strong presumption in favour, it is dangerous to condemn the old constitution, upon any apparent inconveniencies, without a thorough investigation, to judge whether the evils complained of may not arise from some *corrupt deviation*.

In the progress of Society additional props and balances will often become necessary. That of pulling down a whole edifice, to erect a new Building, generally ends in the Destruction of the community,

‘ munity, and always leads to Convulsions
 ‘ which no one could foresee.’ *

A Plan for regulating the affairs of the East - India Company, must not be entirely a new System, but merely extend to the correction of abuses which have arisen ; and adapting the present mode of Administration to the situation of affairs as they now stand.

Every *established* constitution is preferable to a *new one* ; although *that* established may have apparent defects which are corrected in the *new* ; for, as it is absolutely impossible to form any perfect code of Laws, there can be no doubt that every attempt to remove *trivial* objections, will give rise to *essential* defects.

The very extensive *Political* Connexions of the Company in India, point out the necessity of a Governor-General ; as it is absurd in the highest measure, to let *three in-*

* *Preface* to a pamphlet entitled *Thought on our Acquisitions in the East-Indies*, ascribed to an ingenious Gentleman who has taken a very active part in defence of the India Company.

dependent



dependent Governments have the direction of the Military Force, and the conduct of Political Negotiations and Alliances in India, on the very precarious supposition that *these three independent Governments* will pursue the *same objects* and by the *same means* : In case of a war with France it would not only be *natural for*, but the *particular duty of*, each Presidency to provide for their own security in the first instance, although this caution may be the ruin of the whole : I here suppose them all to act merely on the defensive ; but a war merely defensive will ever be ruinous in the event ; the moment of advantage must be seized and pursued. — Pondicherry would not have been reduced to *Ruins*, if the English had thought a *gallant defence of Madras* was all their duty required ; Moderation however is necessary in Victory, desperate measures are proper only in cases that are desperate.

The objections which have been made to a Governor-General are, that, it is investing *too much* power in *one man* ; and it is alledged to be unnecessary, as in the last
war

war the different Settlements made the *greatest exertions* for the common welfare.

The conduct of the Company's Settlements last war, and the very critical situation of affairs then, are with me almost conclusive reasons in favour of a Governor-General.

When Calcutta was taken by Surajah Dowla, advices were hourly expected of the declaration of war with France, and it was well known in India that the French were sending out a formidable armament : However the Governor and Council of Fort St. George thinking the Company would be *undone* if their Establishments in Bengal were not recovered, determined *to risk every thing* in the attempt ; Fortune favoured their Endeavours, and to this magnanimous Resolution the Company owe *their Existence*.

When the affairs of Bengal were settled, by the reduction of Chandernagor and the Battle of Plassey, an Expedition was made from Bengal under Col. Forde into the
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Northern Provinces on the Coast of Chormandel. Whilst Forde was on this service, the French laid siege to Madras; the Fate of the Company again depended on a single event; every thing was at stake, but Col. Forde was not at liberty to come to the assistance of Madras; his orders from Bengal were positive, not to go to the southward nor to put himself under the orders of the Governor and Council of Fort St. George, though He was then within the limits of their Jurisdiction.—Colonel Clive, then governor of Bengal, wrote to Mr. Pigot, in excuse for this extraordinary behaviour, that the Council of Bengal would not consent to Forde's Expedition on any other terms.

That Madras and Bengal *in general* acted on one system during the last war, is very true; but Mr. Pigot was Governor of Madras during the whole of that period; and the Governors of Bengal, Col. Clive and Mr. Vansittart, were Madras Men, who carried with them into Bengal all the par-

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tialities and attachments natural towards the Settlement where they had been bred up, and to their Friends whom they had left behind ; so that the Bengal Government was virtually though not immediately subordinate to Madrafs.

Every body would laugh at the absurdity of sending *three* Generals with *seperate* *Commands* to execute *one* *Service* ; but if the *three* Generals acted with *wisdom* and *publick* *Spirit*, They *might* be successful, notwithstanding the glaring folly of the system.

However, although a Governor-General appears to me, at least a *very expedient*, if not a necessary, measure ; yet the objections to a Governor-General fixed to *one* spot, and vested with the *whole* power, would be liable to very great, if not insurmountable, objections.

The plan proposed by Lord Pigot appears to be the most effectual measure for correcting abuses, and restoring every thing to
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order, viz. “ A Governor-General, to
 “ be assisted by the Governor of the Set-
 “ tlement where he may be, and such
 “ Members of the Council as he may think
 “ proper to summon ; the number being
 “ at no time less than five ; the Governor
 “ of the Settlement to be always one
 “ thereof, and the Governor-General to
 “ have a Negative.”

Altho' this plan mentions a Council of *not less than five*, I know it is, and always was, Lord Pigot's opinion, that the properest mode of transacting the business of the Company, is by *the Council at large* ; his sentiments are that the whole Council ought to be summoned ; unless it should be found any particular members were led, by *private views*, to oppose the necessary reformation or measures of Government ; which he does not apprehend would be the case, as He thinks a Governor, who is determined *to do what is right*, could not have a *constant majority* in Council against him.

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The plan of a Governor-General *fixed in Bengal* is highly absurd; the internal detail of the Bengal Government is amply sufficient to employ the whole attention of the Governor and Council there, and therefore They of all others the most unfit to have the charge of all India: The Dutch Spice-Trade and the Traffick of the Eastern Islands make Batavia, which is their Emporium, no improper place for the residence of their Governor-General: But our Settlements have very little *Commercial Connexion* with each other, and Bengal is by it's situation and circumstances the most unfit for a *Political Super-Intendance*: During many Months no Ships can come out of Bengal River without the utmost difficulty, and these are the months when an enemy will arrive in India; so that every thing may be lost on the Choromandel Coast before *orders for Hostilities* could be received from Bengal.

But, independent of Situation, the particular circumstances of Bengal confines it to
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a narrow bound: The Countries to the East of Bengal are such, as threaten no invasion, and deserve no political consideration; on the West, are independant Maratta States against whom the Company can never carry on an offensive war; they must be kept at home, either by sowing dissensions amongst them, or by raising jealousies in the great Tribe of Marattas; Bengal must ever be confined to a mere defensive war, nothing should induce us to go beyond the Provinces, but Sujah Dowla being absolutely attacked in his own country, as he must be considered as our Barrier to the North: The Force in Bengal should never be diminished so as to expose those Provinces to danger from the North, nor ever more than necessary for their own Defence.

I do not think the regular mode of supplying the Establishments abroad with able and experienced men can be improved: but, to give that *security* and *confidence*, which is due, to the *upright* and *industri-*

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ous ; and to prevent all those irregular nominations and super-cessions, by any Court of Directors, which have been one chief source of confusion, it seems necessary to make a positive regulation that the persons who go out Writers in the Company's Service, shall rise regularly on the *List of Covenanted Servants* whilst under Council, unless they misbehave themselves ; in this case the power of *suspension* 'till the Company's pleasure is known, which is at present vested in the Administration abroad, seems to be a very proper authority. In cases of Fraud or Embezzlement the Company ought to be incapable of *restoring* the Delinquent.

The power also lodged in the Administration in India to preclude, from admission into Council, any person unfit, by notorious want of ability or general bad character, till the pleasure of the Company be known, is undoubtedly highly proper.

The designation of inferiour offices in India ought certainly to be vested in the Administration

Administration there, either in the President subject to the controul of the Council; or in the President and Council: I think the former most eligible.

Each Settlement ought to be maintained distinct, as putting the Servants of the different Presidencies on one List would cause more heart-burnings than any benefits arising from this arrangement could compensate for.

I have only mentioned the *Civil* Servants; but I think there ought to be the same regular gradation in the Military from Cadet to Captain.

The regular succession in any Corps is attended with much greater advantage than a system of irregular promotion, as the *accidental* appointment of an *extraordinary* man does not compensate for the *multitude* of *unworthy preferments* from partialities, connexions or private interests: indeed *extraordinary* men are most likely to be brought forth by the *fair trial* of *abilities in action*.

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In the Service of the Company it has generally been understood that the highest appointments, Civil and Military, were to be made without an absolute attention to Seniority; the Governor being thus selected from the Members of Council, is sufficient encouragement to Merit, whereas precipitate promotion might bring a man into the highest trust before his judgement was ripened.

The succession to the Governor-Generalship, ought to be in the *Senior Governor* belonging to *any* of the Presidencies, who had passed through his government with approbation.

Some regular mode of reward to the Servants of the Company should be established; I think the mode of recompence by annuities and gratuity, the most equitable and the simplest.

The Indian Natives cannot be left too much to their own Laws and Customs; it appears to me that letting them chuse their own Chiefs in every village

village or District, with the permission of removal from thence at certain seasons, would give them all the security they are capable of receiving, without any of those dangerous consequences which may probably be apprehended even in the *best considered* change of Government. The introduction of *Lawyers* will be a *curse* to the Indians, who have existed as a civilized and polished people, many thousand years, *without any Laws but religious, and without ONE Lawyer amongst them.*

The plan of Administration, transmitted from Bengal, is so little deviation from the mode under a good Moorish Government, that it cannot be considered by the Natives as an innovation ; and having been already established by us, if suddenly set aside, must convince the Natives of our unsteadiness and caprice, instead of inspiring them with reverence for our Legislative Powers.

If the Administration of the Company's Government *there*, be conducted with spirit

rit and Integrity, *that* Plan will be effectual : If the administration of the President and Council be lax or corrupt, The *Institutes of all the Lawyers in Europe*, would only pass away like an Utopian Dream.

At the same time I am far from thinking that *one good Lawyer* would not be very beneficial, if joined to the Courts in which the President and Council act in a Judicial Capacity, and to the Mayor's Court, for the assistance of those Courts, in their proceedings where Europeans are concerned.

It is through the *commerce* of the Company *only*, that any advantage, to this Kingdom, can be derived from Bengal ; The Goods provided in India for the Company are called the Investment ; This is a matter of the utmost importance, to which all other considerations must give place : The mode in use on the Coast of Choromandel was also practised in Bengal before 1753.— *There* the Company contract with certain persons, who are called *Company's Merchants*, resident in their Settlements, for *Goods*, to be delivered at a fixed price within

in a stated time, of certain qualities according to pattern, and of certain lengths and breadths; an advance of money is then made to the *Company's Merchant* who is to provide the Goods; and He sends agents to the villages where the Goods are manufactured; These Agents contract with the Weavers to whom they advance money for the Goods wanted, which when manufactured are brought into the Company's Warehouses, where they are measured and examined by the Company's Covenanted Servants, and such as are inferior in quality, or deficient in measure, are rejected, or received at an abatement of price.

In Bengal, instead of contracting with *Company's Merchants*; agents, called *Gomastahs*, are sent to the villages to provide the Goods for the Company: It is unnecessary to point out the many obvious abuses the Manufacturer *must* suffer from these Agents armed with the name of Authority.

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This change in the mode of providing the Investment, it is said, was made in consequence of the Country Government laying frequent *embargos* to extort Money from the *Company's Merchant*, who was not entitled to the privilege of the *Dustuck*, or *Free Passport of the Goods*, enjoyed by the Company and their immediate Servants; perhaps also a false notion of Oeconomy might influence the Company, to provide the Goods without the intervention of a *Merchant* between Them and the Manufacturer: But the Gentoos are so much engaged by ties of affinity that the Heads of families are bound to support all their Kindred; the Company's Merchants having a Tribe of Relations whom they were bound to support, they could therefore conveniently, and in a manner at no expence, employ them as Agents in providing the Goods for the Company's Investment; whereas *Gomastahs*, if not amply paid by the Company, must recompence themselves by abuses: And by this change
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in providing the Investment, the great Gentoo Families which had flourished under the Company's protection were destroyed or impoverished.

When the Moorish Government subsisted uncontrouled, had the Gomastahs been guilty of any acts of oppression, they would have suffered condign punishment; but when the authority in good measure devolved on the Company, the *restraint on these agents* was removed, and the manufacturer left too much at their mercy.

It appears absolutely requisite to restore *the antient mode of providing the Investment*, by *Company's Merchants*, and totally to abolish the use of *Gomastahs*. The Prices of the Goods contracted for are regularly settled, and no wanton change should be made in those prices.

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